

Triple jumper Yevgen Pashchenko's victory at the NCAA Division II outdoor championships was instrumental in ACU's team title. He also won his event at the national indoor meet.

Digest

Woodhouse, Witherspoon named to track and field halls of fame

Former ACU track and field standouts **Mark Witherspoon ('85)** and **Bill Woodhouse ('59)** were each inducted into a prestigious hall of fame during the spring. In May at the NCAA Division II outdoor track and field national championship meet in Walnut, Calif., Witherspoon was inducted into the NCAA Division II Track and Field Hall of Fame.

Witherspoon was a key member of coach Don Hood's ('55) NCAA Division II national championship teams in 1983-85 with six titles (100 in 1985, 200 in 1984, 400 in 1984, 4x100 relay in 1984 and 4x400 relay in 1984 and 1985). He earned all-America honors in both NCAA Divisions I and II at ACU.

In April, Woodhouse was inducted into the Penn Relays Hall of Fame, entering with a class that included nine-time Olympic gold medalist Carl Lewis.

Woodhouse won four Penn Relays titles during his ACU career, running the third leg on the 1958 440-yard relay championship team, and then anchoring the winning 880-yard relay team in 1958 and the 440-yard and 880-yard relay teams in 1959.

Woodhouse – a member of the ACU Sports Hall of Fame and the Drake Relays Hall of Fame – twice tied the world record in the 100-yard dash (9.3 seconds) in 1957 and 1959 during his career at Abilene Christian for coach Oliver Jackson ('42). He also ran on Wildcat relay teams that set world records in the 440-yard and 880-yard relays.

Lively signs with Rams

ACU senior offensive tackle **Britt Lively ('04)** signed a free-agent contract with the St. Louis Rams on May 12.

Lively was named first team all-America by the American Football Coaches' Association and the Associated Press.

The Rams' running backs coach is former ACU all-America and Philadelphia Eagles' all-pro Wilbert Montgomery ('77).

Morrow's gold medal on display

The Olympic Games gold medal won by **Bobby Morrow** and donated to ACU has been loaned to the Bob Bullock Texas State History Museum in Austin for display later this summer.

The medal, one of three the 1958 ACU graduate won in the 1956 Olympic Games in Melbourne, Australia, will be displayed before, during and after the 2004 games in Athens, Greece, Aug. 13-29. Morrow won gold medals in the 100, 200 and 400 relay and donated the others to the Smithsonian Institution in Washington, D.C., and the Texas Sports Hall of Fame in Waco.

Nailbiting outdoor meet fitting way to close track season

The final day of the 2004 NCAA Division II national championships started inauspiciously but ended in more glory for the Wildcats.

Faulty baton exchanges cost both 4x100 relay teams valuable points in the finals. However, the men recovered to win the team title, 75-74, over St. Augustine's (N.C.), and the women rebounded to finish third.

MEN'S TRACK AND FIELD

The outdoor crown capped off a season in which the Wildcats also won NCAA Division II indoor and Lone Star Conference titles.

The two national titles extend ACU's streak to three straight outdoor and six straight overall (indoor and outdoor titles in 2002-04).

"I really didn't think the men could win after the disqualification," ACU head coach Jon Murray said of the outdoor meet's drama. "It was going to be tight against St. Augustine's as it was, but that only made it tougher."

The men's team rallied and had closed to within just 11 points (64-53) after freshman Marvin

Bien-Aime stunned the crowd by finishing second in the 200 meters, just ahead of teammate Christie VanWyk ('04).

Bernard Manirakiza ('05) had already done his part to help get the Wildcats close, winning both the 800 meters and 1500 meters for the second consecutive year, adding to the 800-meter and mile national crowns he won at the indoor meet.

Trailing by 11 points, ACU pinned its hopes on the triple jump and the 4x400 relay. Both came through for the Wildcats.

Sophomore Yevgen Pashchenko and junior Ben Washington finished first and third, respectively, in the triple jump to give ACU 16 big points, as well as a five-point lead

(69-64) over St. Augustine's going into the relay.

Pashchenko, who won the triple jump indoors, jumped 52-7.25 to win the title, while Washington – gallantly competing with a severely sprained left ankle – went 50-10.25 for third place.

"Ben is the real hero of the meet, as far as I'm concerned," Pashchenko said. "No one knew if he could even compete in the meet, and he gave a great performance."

The men only had to finish third in the 4x400 relay to win the title, and they did just that.

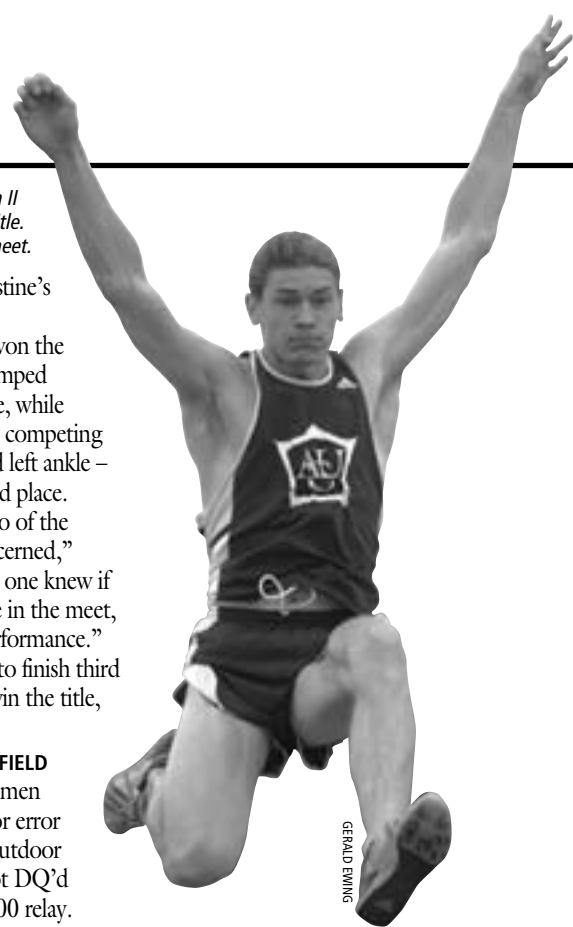
WOMEN'S TRACK AND FIELD

Murray said the women really had no margin for error entering the national outdoor meet, "and then we got DQ'd right away" in the 4x100 relay.

Overall, the ACU women finished third behind Lincoln University and Adams State, following a fourth-place finish in the national indoor championships.

Senior Stephanie Warren provided most of ACU's highlights at the national outdoor meet, winning the triple jump (43-4.25, good enough to qualify for the U.S. Olympic Trials), finishing third in the high jump (5-8.50) and sixth in the long jump (18-10.00).

Earlier in the year, freshman



GERALD EWING

Liga Klavina won the shot put indoors, and junior Adeh Mwamba proved to be a valuable performer by finishing second in the 1500 meters and third in the 5000 meters outdoors. She also won LSC titles in the 800 meters, 1500 meters, 3000 meters and 5000 meters.

However, ACU's run of 20 consecutive LSC titles was broken in 2004 by Angelo State, which won the women's title by one point, 222-221, over the Wildcats. ▲



GERALD EWING

Val Gorter set a NCAA Division II women's pole vault record of 13-3 on March 27 at the Oliver Jackson Open in Abilene.



Tennis teams reach national tournament; Goethals defends regional golf crown

It would be easy to suggest that the 2004 men's and women's tennis seasons were just others in a long line of successful ones that ended with early exits from the NCAA Division II national tournament.

Think again.

The ACU women's team lost three all-America players off its roster from 2003, had no seniors and four juniors on its roster in 2004 and still managed to finish the season 29-7 before being bounced out of the national quarterfinals by eventual national champion BYU-Hawaii. The loss to the Seaside marked the third straight year they have beaten ACU in the quarterfinals and then gone on to win the national championship.

"To lose three all-America players and be able to do what we were able to do this year says a lot about the abilities of the young women we have on our team," ACU head coach Hutton Jones ('81) said of his women's team, which won Lone Star Conference and NCAA Division II South Central Region championships to reach the national tournament. "I knew we had a chance to have a good team, but you never know how it's going to play out until you get on the court. The thing that excites me the most, though, is that they'll all be back next year, and we'll make another run at getting over that hump at the national tournament."

And they'll be led by **Colleen Reynolds**, who will be a junior in 2004-05. Reynolds, the LSC Women's Player of the Year, won the ITA Central Region singles title last fall, and then went on to win the consolation championship at the ITA national championship tournament.

On the men's side, ACU finished 25-6 and reached the national tournament before losing to Southwest Baptist in the first round. But the Wildcats set the school record for wins in a season, and their .806 winning percentage is the third-highest in the history of the program, behind the 1986 team that finished 14-2 (.875) and the 1998 team (22-4 and .846).

This year's Wildcat team might have been the deepest of any of the seven previous ones Jones has coached at ACU. With **Casper Steenkamp** – ITA Central Region champion and LSC Men's Player of the Year – playing at No. 1, followed by seniors **Trent Broach**, **Clayton Morgan** and **Jason Purser** and sophomore **George Carstens**, the Wildcats were able to play sophomore **Evan Puglia** at the bottom of the lineup. The Wildcats played seven 5-4 matches during the season, and Puglia was 4-0 in match-deciding singles play.

"We had some guys who just knew what it took to win matches, and they did that all season," said Jones, whose team won LSC and NCAA region titles to earn its trip to the national tournament. "The most exciting thing is that we return seven lettermen next year, and we have a couple of really good players coming in who could give us our best team ever."

ACU head golf coach **Mike Campbell** ('91) knew going into his first season at the helm of the program that an overnight turnaround wouldn't happen.

But give Campbell ('91) and his Wildcats kudos for accomplishing what some might have thought impossible before the season started: a bid to the NCAA Division II South Central Region tournament.

"That was a big accomplishment for this group of guys," Campbell said. "We made it our goal to reach the regional tournament and keep the tradition of ACU golf alive, and they were able to do that."

The Wildcats rallied around senior **Pierre Goethals**, who once again proved himself one of the top golfers in the region by finishing fourth at the Lone Star

Conference tournament before repeating as the individual champion at the NCAA Division II South Central Region tournament. Goethals, who earned first team all-LSC and first team all-region honors, finished tied for 41st at the national tournament.

The Wildcats, who finished eighth at the conference tournament, posted a solid fifth-place team finish at the regional tournament, giving Campbell hope that a turnaround might not be far away.

"This is a program that has very high expectations, and I'm comfortable with those expectations," Campbell said. "We have some guys coming in next year that I believe will help us get back to the level we're accustomed to around here."

It hasn't happened to **Britt Bonneau** very often as ACU's head baseball coach – the opportunity to watch the NCAA Division II South Central Region Tournament from a fan's perspective.

But that's what Bonneau did this year when he traveled to Cleveland, Miss., to watch the tournament as the chair of the regional committee and member of the national baseball committee. It marked the first time since 1999 that Bonneau hadn't taken his team to the regional tournament, and it was especially tough considering the Wildcats were coming off a season in which they had reached the NCAA Division II College World Series.

The Wildcats finished the 2004 season 31-25 and with a share of the Lone Star Conference South Division title. But they were eliminated from the conference's post-season tournament with a pair of second-day losses, marking the first time since 1998 that ACU did not play for the LSC title. ACU started the season 2-6 and then fell to 11-16 before rebounding to win 20 of its last 29 games. But that big early hole was too much to overcome.

"We just never could find a groove early in the season, and that hurt us," Bonneau said. "We lost a lot of great players off that team from last year, and we had to find an entirely new chemistry with this group. We found a little bit of that late in the season, and I was proud of the way this group battled back from the way we started the season."

Nine Wildcats were named all-conference, including first-team selections in seniors **Aaron Lawler** and **Matt Callahan**, juniors **Cody Cure** and **Coy Polk**, and sophomore **Ben Brockman**.

First-year softball coach **Chantiel Wilson** ('98) built the foundation in 2004 for what she hopes will be many successful campaigns to come.

After a 9-17 start, the Wildcats re-grouped to win 11 of their next 20 games and head into the final weekend of the season with a chance to reach the Lone Star Conference Post-Season Tournament. But the Wildcats lost four games to eventual national champion Angelo State to dash their post-season dreams.

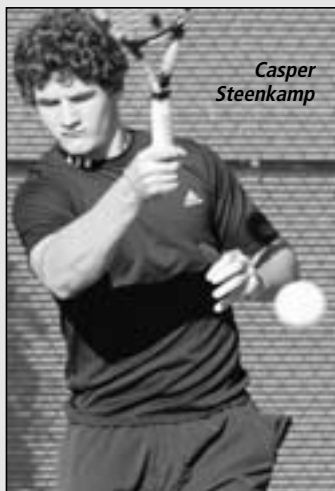
Still, the Wildcats' 20-30 season was not without its successes as junior first baseman **Katie Bryan** became the school's all-time leader in home runs and RBI on her way to being named first team all-LSC South Division, first team NCAA Division II all-South Central Region and third team all-America.

And with Bryan and 10 other letterwinners returning next season – including the addition of a quality recruiting class – Wilson is excited about 2005.

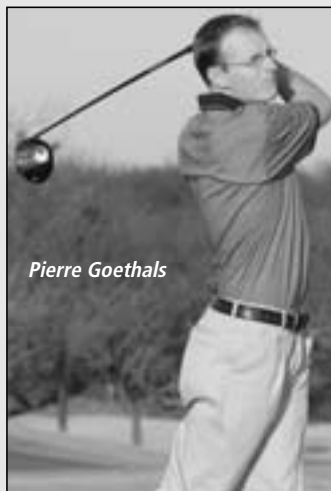
"One of the things we wanted to do this year was be competitive every day we stepped on the field, and I think we were able to do that," Wilson said. "We have a lot of talented players coming back and several coming in who could make next season an exciting one." ▲



Colleen Reynolds



Casper Steenkamp



Pierre Goethals



Katie Bryan

Wildcat basketball teams continue work to reach top of LSC

After three seasons of unfulfilled expectations, the women's basketball team finally returned to the Lone Star Conference Post-Season Tournament in 2003-04 under the direction of first-year head coach Shawna Lavender.

The ACU men, meanwhile, continued to put together the pieces that head coach Clint Pleasant ('98) hopes will make the Wildcats a force next season in the LSC South Division.

The ACU women finished the season at 19-10, grabbing the runner-up spot in the LSC South Division and reaching the conference post-season tournament for the first time since the 1999-2000 season.

The Wildcats hammered East Central, 99-67, behind a record-setting performance from guard Ashley King ('06) before falling in the semifinals to eventual regional runner-up Northeastern State, 66-65.

The loss ended the brilliant career of center Melanie Carter, who became the third leading scorer in both LSC and ACU history. She is the LSC and Wildcat all-time leader in field goal percentage, and is fourth

in NCAA history. She'll be missed next season, along with center Lysie Blau, forward Jackie Vinson, and guards Jenny Jackson and Leah Wilson.

However, Lavender will welcome back King, whose 8-for-8 performance from 3-point range in the win over East Central etched her name in the NCAA record book.

King – who set the school's single-season mark for 3-pointers with 74 – tied the NCAA Division II



Ashley King

record for most 3-pointers made in a game without a miss, and broke both the LSC and ACU records. Her 8-for-8 effort was part of a string of 14 straight 3-pointers she made, breaking the NCAA Division II record of 11 by Shelby Peterson of South Dakota in 1992.

Also returning next season will be guard Kristal Robeson, forward Stephanie Riles, center Jamie Boles, forward Meredith Doyle and guard Kierstan Barbee.



David Baxter

On the men's side, ACU finished 12-15, but Pleasant once again had his team positioned to make a run at a spot in the post-season tournament going into the final three games.

Eight of ACU's 15 losses were decided by four points or less.

After the season, the Wildcats said goodbye to two four-year starters in guard Rodney Lee and forward Tucker Pierson.

Lee finished his career second on the school's all-time list for career 3-pointers (279) and 10th on ACU's all-time scoring list with 1,498 points. Pierson led the LSC in rebounds per game as a senior (9.1), and he finished with 1,119 points and 645 career rebounds.

Returning next season will be guard David Baxter, whose 80 3-pointers in 2003-04 were the third-best single-season total in school history. Other expected returnees are Atiba Alexander, Matt Sutherland, Calvin Nite, Adrian Scott, Matthias Krieg and Mauro Matai.

Pleasant and his staff also are excited about the players they have signed in the off-season, including 6-6, 220-pound forward Hakim Rasul, a second team all-America last season at Midland College.

Pleasant said Rasul will have an "instant impact" on the Wildcat program. ▲

Junior varsity baseball team experience pays off for walk-on freshman pitcher Maynard

When ACU announced last summer that it was starting a junior varsity athletics program for football, baseball and men's and women's basketball, most coaches hoped it would yield one or two players who could play backup roles on the varsity in a year or two.

Apparently, none of ACU's baseball coaches shared that thought process with a freshman walk-on pitcher named **Ben Maynard** from Loveland, Colo.

Maynard turned an early season call-up to the bullpen into a starter's role that eventually led him to a spot on the all-Lone Star Conference South Division second team.

Maynard is perhaps the quintessential walk-on athlete: 5-10, 165 pounds with no physical attributes that would set him apart from any other student on campus.

But something inside Maynard burned bright enough to make him believe he could find a way onto the varsity after a strong performance during last fall's workouts.

"I enjoyed playing on the junior varsity last fall and into the spring, because I bonded so much with a lot of those guys," Maynard said. "I knew, though, that if I ever got my shot I would have to raise my level of play. Fortunately for me, I've always been a guy who's been able to do that."

Maynard received his chance early in the season when he was called up, mainly to pitch out of the bullpen after some early-season injuries to Wildcat pitchers.

"I liked him in the fall, mainly because he was a competitor

and went to the mound with an air of confidence knowing he could get people out," said ACU assistant coach and JV head coach Brandon Stover ('00). "He had pitched well a couple of times at the JV level, and when (head coach) Britt (Bonneau) saw him pitch, he liked him and moved him up."

Maynard made a couple of appearances in relief before earning his first starting assignment and a win Feb. 14 over Panhandle State.

"I really thought I would be mainly a late-inning relief guy who would help us get to (closer) Coy Polk," Maynard said. "But some things happened that gave me a shot at starting, and I didn't want to be one of those guys who makes a start and then gets sent back to the bullpen."

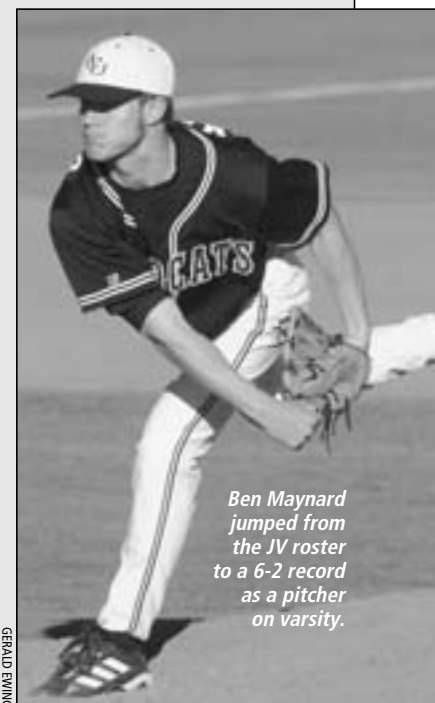
After the Feb. 14 start, he made 10 more starts and 15 more appearances during the season, finishing 6-2 with a 4.44 earned run average. He was third on the team with 57 strikeouts.

"Ben isn't a guy who has prototypical physical tools," Stover said. "He's not the big, strong guy everybody is looking for, but he knows how to pitch."

And he knows that the secret about him is probably out.

"In any league, it gets tougher every year because people have a book on you, and they get used to you," Maynard said. "But I'm confident in what I can do, and I'll come in next season with the same attitude and 'stuff' and see what happens."

ACU coaches would be happy with a repeat of 2004. ▲



Ben Maynard jumped from the JV roster to a 6-2 record as a pitcher on varsity.